

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

12. (Five Times Amended) A folding knife, comprising:

a handle defining a blade cavity and a first end;

a blade having a first end and a second end opposite said first end; said first end of said blade having a blade pivot connected to said first end of said handle for pivotal movement of said blade about said blade pivot between an extended position wherein the blade is outside of said blade cavity and a retracted position wherein the blade is substantially within said blade cavity; and

a spring biased plunger assembly configured to provide a spring force to assist to maintain the blade in the extended position while the blade is in the extended position, and a spring force to assist to retain the blade in the retracted position while the blade is in the retracted position, the plunger assembly having:

a first end slidably and pivotably connected to said handle for longitudinal and/or pivotal movement of said plunger assembly relative to said handle as said blade moves between said retracted and extended positions; and

a second end opposite said first end, said second end of said plunger assembly pivotally connected to said first end of said blade for orbital movement about said blade pivot as said blade moves between said retracted and extended positions.

15. (Thrice Amended) A folding knife comprising:

a handle defining a blade cavity and a first end;

a blade having a first end and a second end opposite said first end; said first end of said blade having a blade pivot connected to said first end of said handle for pivotal movement of said blade about said blade pivot between an extended position wherein the blade

is outside of said blade cavity and a retracted position wherein the blade is substantially within said blade cavity;

a spring biased plunger assembly configured to provide a spring force to assist to maintain the blade in the extended position while the blade is in the extended position, and a spring force to assist to retain the blade in the retracted position while the blade is in the retracted position, the plunger assembly having:

a first end slidably and pivotably connected to said handle for longitudinal and/or pivotal movement of said plunger assembly relative to said handle as said blade moves between said retracted and extended positions; and

a second end opposite said first end, said second end of said plunger assembly pivotally connected to said first end of said blade for orbital movement about said blade pivot as said blade moves between said retracted and extended positions; and

a safety member connected to said handle for movement between a locking position and an unlocking position; said safety member defining an engagement portion projecting into the path of movement of said plunger assembly for contacting said plunger.

23. (Five Times Amended) A folding knife, comprising:

a handle having a blade cavity and a first end;

a blade having a first end and a second end opposite said first end, said first end of said blade having an aperture;

a blade pivot connected to said first end of said handle and extending through the aperture for pivotal movement of said blade about said blade pivot between an extended position wherein the blade is outside of said blade cavity and a retracted position wherein the majority of the blade is within said blade cavity; and

a plunger including a spring, the plunger pivotally connected to the blade at a first end, and pivotally coupled to the handle at a second end, the spring being maximally deformed when the blade is pivoted to an intermediate point between the extended position and retracted position, thereby causing the spring to assist opening of the blade when the blade is pivoted from the retracted position toward the extended position beyond the intermediate point.

34. (Five Times Amended) A folding knife comprising:

a handle;

a blade pivoted on said handle for movement between stowed and deployed conditions relative to the handle; and

an elongate, force-transmitting biasing spring having a variable length, the spring operatively attached between said blade and said handle, where said spring exhibits both an increase and a decrease in the length of the spring as said blade is moved from the stowed condition to the deployed condition.

45. (Five Times Amended) A knife comprising:

a handle;

a blade pivotally coupled to the handle to be moveable about a blade pivot point, such that the blade moves between a stowed position and a deployed position;

a plunger coupled between the handle and the blade such that a portion of the plunger remains a fixed distance from the blade pivot point; and

a spring coupled to the plunger to act on the blade to urge the blade into the stowed position when the blade is moved to the stowed position, and operates on the blade to urge the blade toward the deployed position when the blade is moved by an outside force from the stowed position at least partially toward the deployed position.

52. (Twice Amended) A folding knife comprising:

a handle;

a blade having a tang coupled to the handle, the blade configured to rotate, relative to the handle, between a retracted position and an extended position;

biasing means for holding the blade in the retracted position in the handle while the blade is in the retracted position and for biasing the blade toward the extended position relative to the handle when the blade is moved from the retracted position past a point of maximum bias toward the extended position; and

moving means for moving the blade from the retracted position to the extended position with one hand while holding the knife with the same one hand.

58. (Twice Amended) A folding knife comprising:

a handle;

a blade having a tang coupled to the handle, the blade configured to rotate, relative to the handle, through an arc between a retracted position and an extended position when an opening force is applied to the blade;

a contact pin coupled to the blade and extending outward from the blade, positioned such that a user, holding the knife in one hand, can apply an opening force to the blade with a thumb or finger of the same hand;

a biasing element including a spring;

a first coupling element operatively coupling a first end of the biasing element to the handle; and

a second coupling element operatively coupling a second end of the biasing element to the blade.

60. (Amended) The knife of claim 58 further including a plurality of ridges positioned on the tang of the blade.

61. (Canceled)

62. (Twice Amended) A folding knife comprising:

a handle;

a blade having a tang coupled to the handle, the blade configured to rotate, relative to the handle, through an arc between a retracted position and an extended position when an opening force is applied to the blade;

a contact pin on the blade, positioned such that a user, holding the knife in one hand, can apply an opening force to the blade with a thumb or finger of the same hand;

a biasing element including a spring, configured to apply a closing force to the blade while the blade is in the retracted position;

a first coupling element operatively coupling a first end of the biasing element to the handle; and

a second coupling element operatively coupling a second end of the biasing element to the blade.

63. (Amended) A folding knife comprising:

a handle;

a blade having a tang coupled to the handle, the blade configured to rotate, relative to the handle, through an arc between a retracted position and an extended position when an opening force is applied to the blade;

a contact pin on the blade, extending perpendicular to a plane of travel of the blade and positioned such that a user, holding the knife in one hand, can apply an opening force to the blade with a thumb or finger of the same hand;

a biasing element including a spring, configured to resist rotation of the blade toward the extended position while the blade is in the retracted position;

a first coupling element operatively coupling a first end of the biasing element to the handle; and

a second coupling element operatively coupling a second end of the biasing element to the blade.

64. (Canceled)

65. (New) A folding knife, comprising:

a handle having a blade cavity and a first end;

a blade having a first end and a second end opposite said first end; said first end of said blade having an aperture;

a blade pivot connected to said first end of said handle and extending through the aperture for pivotal movement of said blade about said blade pivot between an extended position wherein the blade is outside of said blade cavity and a retracted position wherein the majority of the blade is within said blade cavity;

a plunger including a spring, the plunger pivotally connected to the blade at a first end, and operatively coupled to the handle at a second end, the spring being maximally deformed

when the blade is pivoted to an intermediate point between the extended position and retracted position, thereby causing the spring to assist opening of the blade when the blade is pivoted from the retracted position toward the extended position beyond the intermediate point; and

a safety member connected to said handle for movement between a locking position and an unlocking position; said safety member defining an engagement portion projecting into a path of movement of said plunger when said safety member is in said locking position for contacting and restraining movement of said plunger when said blade is in said extended position, to thereby lock said blade in said extended position.

66. (New) A folding knife comprising:

a handle;

a blade having a tang coupled to the handle, the blade configured to rotate, relative to the handle, through an arc between a retracted position and an extended position when an opening force is applied to the blade;

a contact pin on the blade, extending perpendicular to a plane of travel of the blade and positioned such that a user, holding the knife in one hand, can apply opening force to the blade with a finger of the same hand;

a biasing element including a spring, configured to resist rotation of the blade toward the extended position while the blade is in the retracted position;

a first coupling element operatively coupling a first end of the biasing element to the handle;

a second coupling element operatively coupling a second end of the biasing element to the blade; and

a locking member positioned in the handle and having a first position in which the blade may be freely moved between the retracted and extended positions and a second position in which the blade is locked in the extended position.